

has been made to work by the good will of individuals. In the stress of war unsound systems of dual control are apt to break down, with deplorable results to the country.

It is obvious from the above that of the original hawser which bound the Fleet Air Arm to the Royal Air Force only a few strands remain. It would be no great matter to break those few strands. It only means withdrawing 30 per cent. of the pilots, the riggers and the fitters, and putting them on to other R.A.F. duties, while their places would be taken by an equal number of naval personnel. The Admiralty's payments for the F.A.A. would appear in the Admiralty Estimates instead of figuring in the Air Estimates as an appropriation-in-aid. Doubtless there would need to be a few minor adjustments, but nothing of any consequence.

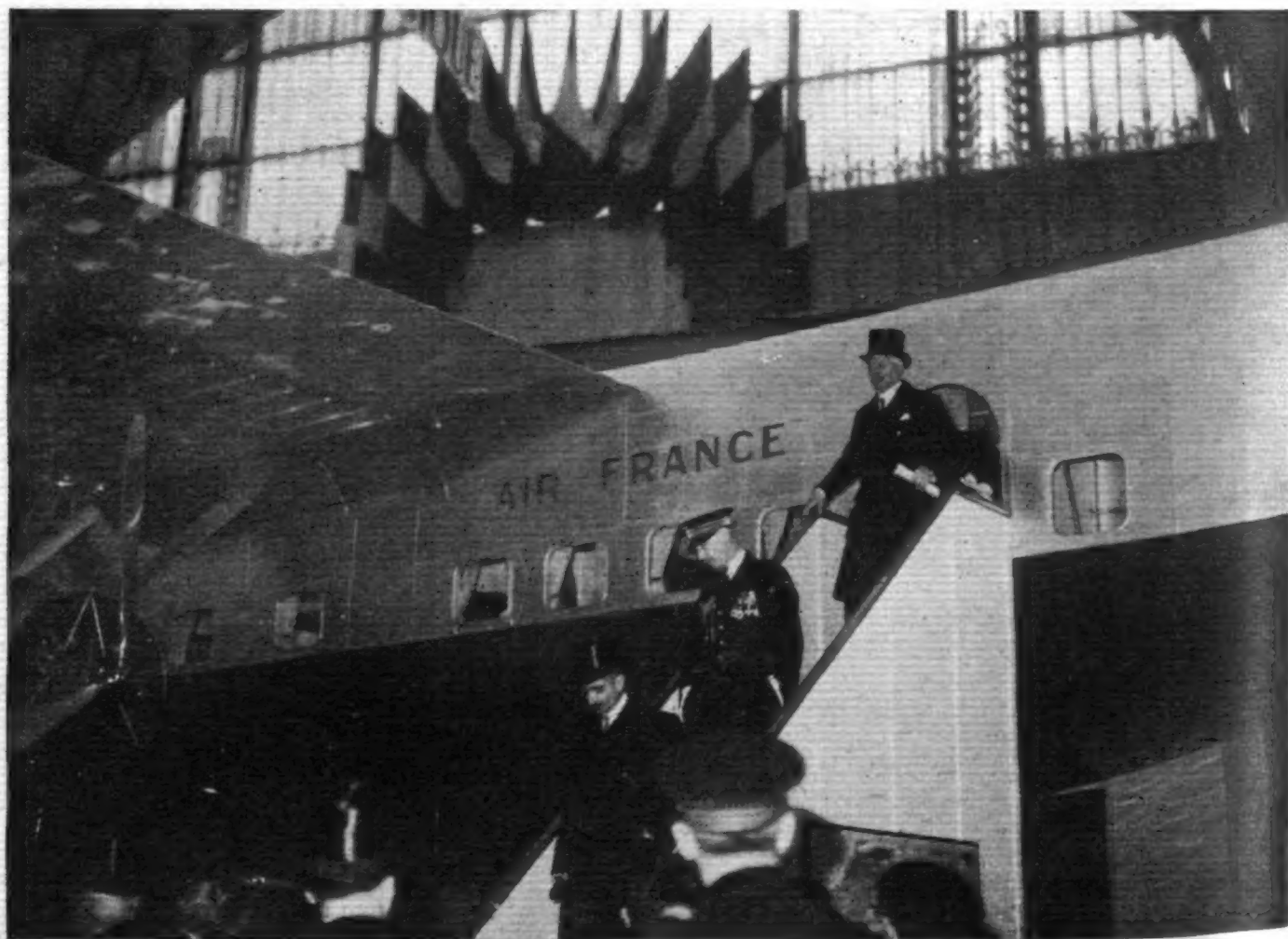
### Safeguards

There always are a few inconveniences when any change in organisation is undertaken, and perhaps some danger of new mistakes. It would be wise to consider in advance some rules to minimise the chance of future mistakes. After making the change it must be borne always in mind that the Fleet Air Arm would only be an arm of the Navy, much as submarines are, whereas the Royal Air Force would remain a Service on the same footing with the Army and the Navy. For the sake of economy and common sense it should be laid down that the Air Ministry must remain the sole source of aircraft supply, and that all orders for naval aircraft must be placed through the Air Ministry as they are at present. There must be no competition for orders as in the bad old days before April 1, 1918.

Likewise economy and common sense dictate that there should be only one set of *ab initio* flying training schools for all the Services, and that they should be managed by the Air Ministry as at present. The special School of Naval Co-operation should be taken over by the Admiralty and charged to the Estimates of that Ministry. It would also be extravagant and foolish to permit duplication of aeronautical research. Some people anticipate that the Admiralty would want to set up its own edition of Farnborough, and perhaps its own edition of the National Physical Laboratory. Naval aircraft may have some special needs for which the Admiralty would want special research undertaken, but the principle should be laid down that all research work will be pooled, and that the Air Ministry should be responsible for it. It is for the Cabinet to guard against breaches of that principle.

Once the Admiralty is in complete control of all officers, men, and machines on its ships, we may anticipate with confidence that the old antagonism between it and the Air Ministry will die away for want of fuel to feed the flames. Hitherto the Fleet Air Arm has been like a salient in the Air Ministry trench line, always inviting attacks. Let that salient be evacuated, and the line will gain in strength.

If the Admiralty gains its point on this occasion, it must be anticipated that in due course the War Office will make a similar demand for its own Air Arm. If the arrangement made now with the Admiralty is on sound lines there will be a precedent for dealing with a similar claim by the War Office. In that case the War Office would, of course, bear the cost of its squadrons and of the School of Army Co-operation.



THE OPENING : M. Albert Lebrun, President of the French Republic, leaves the cabin of the big Farman 224 during his tour of inspection following the official opening.